

# **PROFITS OVER PUBLIC GOOD: THE BUSINESS OF POLITICS IN THE PHILIPPINES**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Filipino political landscape is characterized by a complex interaction of dynamics of power, social issues, and economic interests, which together create an environment in which the public service often brings a seat for effort. The nation, with its distinct historical context of colonialism and ongoing struggles with various forms of governance, presents a unique case for the examination of political priorities. In this context, politicians often operate within a framework that significantly appreciates financial income and personal enrichment on the supply of essential public services. The manifestations of this inclination are evident in numerous aspects of the political system, reflecting a worrying trend in which the needs and well-being of the population are obscured by monetary concerns.

## **PROFITS OVER PUBLIC GOOD**

The statement that profit is a priority for public service in the Philippines is not simply an accusation but rather an observation based on empirical tests and social experiences. The purchase of votes is one of the very good examples of this priority. During the electoral seasons, the public testifies to an evident commodification of the votes, in which electoral candidates often resort to financial incentive compensates in exchange for their support. This phenomenon undermines the democratic process, transforming it into a transactional exchange rather than a platform for true civic commitment and responsibility. When political aspirations are intertwined with monetary incentives, the resulting electoral panorama is that in which the authentic needs of citizens are relegated to simple transactional interactions, thus illustrating a systematic degradation of democratic principles.

On the other hand, the controversial nature of the electoral debates has gradually evolved into a show guided more by personality policy and the strategic campaign rather than from substantial discussions on policies that influence the lives of ordinary citizens. Political announcements and debates often resemble business marketing strategies rather than civic dialogues, strengthening the idea that political candidates are positioned less as public employees and more as products

in a competitive market. The emphasis on the image and public perception decreases attention on the formulation of policies and governance ethics, perpetuating an environment in which political aspirations are seen mainly through the lens of profitability and public relations.

In addition to these problems, exploitation policies have become a salient feature of Filipino governance. Legislation often favors company interests on citizens' well-being, leading to practices that aggravate social inequalities and economic disparities. For example, the policies that prioritize foreign investments by neglecting at the same time the development of the local sector exemplify how governance can rotate towards the maximization of profit at the expense of the well-being of the community. These exploitation frameworks suggest that the political arena, instead of acting as a facilitator for public service, has transformed into a platform for entrepreneurial initiatives that enrich some marginalizing the many.

Considering these pervasive practices, it becomes clear that Philippine politics increasingly embodies a commercial enterprise rather than a civil duty. The entry of profit reasons with the imperatives of public service raises critical questions about the future of democracy, responsibility, and governance in the country. As political structures satisfy this trend, the challenge remains for citizens and civic groups to support a return to a more oriented approach to the governance service, in which the emphasis moves again to deal with the needs and rights of the population rather than simple financial interests. The purchase of votes represents a worrying and widespread strategy in the Philippine Policy scenario, in which candidates take advantage of financial incentives to ensure electoral support. This practice, often considered a transactional agreement between voters and candidates, became a normalized element within the electoral process, effectively transforming civic duty into a trade exchange. Generally, acceptance of voting purchases can be attributed to several socioeconomic factors that cultivate an environment in which monetary considerations overshadow democratic principles.

In many cases, candidates direct their efforts to needy communities, areas characterized by economic deprivation and limited access to essential services. In this context, candidates employ the purchase of votes as a strategic maneuver to explore the vulnerabilities of these populations. Communities that suffer from poverty usually prioritize immediate monetary gain over long-term political engagement or ideological commitments. This dynamic reflects a significant

imbalance of power; Candidates capitalize on the desperation of the electorate, positioning themselves as suppliers of financial hope in the face of systemic neglect. The motivations behind this practice are not limited to the electoral cycle; Instead, they reflect a broader trend of using economic leverage to manipulate the public feeling and the support of meetings, thus reinforcing a cycle of dependence and deprivation of privileges.

Moreover, the implications of voting vote extend beyond the mere act, corroding the fundamental democratic principles and instilling a widespread sense of cynicism within the electorate. When electoral results depend on monetary exchanges, instead of informed decision-making, the integrity of the democratic process is fundamentally compromised. Voters may begin to internalize the perspective that their participation in government functions exists only as a commodity, not as a civic obligation. This reformulation of policy as a profit-oriented company leads to a decreased public confidence in government institutions as citizens are disappointed with a system perceived as corrupt and disgusting to their needs. Consequently, the normalization of the purchase of votes not only compromises the justice of the elections but also perpetuates a cycle of deserving among voters, distancing them from genuine civic involvement and alienating them from their democratic rights.

### **THE REPERCUSSIONS**

The repercussions of this cycle are reflective, contributing to a political culture where responsibility is eclipsed by a transactional mindset. Given the unbridled purchase of votes, the electorate can become less likely to defend substantive political changes or effective governance, as their immediate needs are continually approached through opportunistic monetary exchanges, not legitimate representation systems. Thus, the notion of policy as a public service is impaired, solidifying the perception that effective governance is subordinate to the whims of financial transactions. In this environment, electoral debates descend into contentious shows characterized by populist rhetoric disconnected from the pressing realities faced by constituents, further diverting the attention from critically necessary political discussions.

In short, the purchase of votes in the Philippines illustrates the pernicious intertwined of profit and politics, proposing significant questions about the future of democratic involvement in the country. As candidates continue to explore economic vulnerabilities and social inequalities, the perspectives of genuine public

service and civic responsibility retreat, leaving a political scenario marked by transaction and deprivation., In the context of Philippine Politics, electoral debates have become increasingly a platform for policy discussion and another battlefield for personal attacks and divisive rhetoric. Candidates are involved in controversial exchanges that often turn to the domain of the murder of character rather than substantive speech. This focus on sensationalism diminishes the critical issues in question, specifically the policies that affect the daily lives of citizens. Instead of getting involved in a significant debate about its proposed platforms or the preferences that the country faces, candidates often capitalize on polarized feelings to gather their foundations. This decrease in electoral debates to mere theaters emphasizes a disturbing tendency in which political competition resembles a market rivalry, where populism, rhetoric, and charisma replace the robust discussion of policies that must ideally form the cornerstone of political engagement.

This change towards personalization of politics has profound implications for governance. When the public is captivated by the drama of political debates, not by the solutions proposed by the candidates, the essence of democracy is compromised. Voters are less informed about viable political choices, creating an environment conducive to sponsorship and buying votes, as individuals engage in transactional policy rather than forming civic opinions based on informed discussions. This transactional mindset participates in a larger exploration culture, where policies are often created to benefit oligarchs and corporations, rather than prioritize the needs of citizens.

## **THE OLIGARCHIC INFLUENCE**

The oligarchic influence on the formulation of policies in the Philippines is palpable, as legislative structures and governance strategies often meet the interests of a few select. Core industries, such as telecommunications, energy, and infrastructure development, usually see the government's policies distorted to their advantage, subsidizing the richness of rich business tycoons, while the wider population sustains the repercussions of improper public services. Government incentives are regularly targeted to private companies, facilitating the accumulation of profits at the cost of the public good. This standard not only reinforces existing economic disparities but also perpetuates a cycle in which politics is more about business maneuvers than civic responsibility.

In addition, policies that exploit citizens manifest themselves through regressive taxation, under public services, and deterioration of essential social security networks. For example, tax systems that disproportionately overload the low-income classes illustrate the prioritization of revenue generation about equitable tax responsibilities. Although the proponents of such policies argue the need for economic growth, the reality is that this growth usually benefits a narrow stratum of society while exacerbating inequality between the masses. The lack of responsibility for the provision of public services further highlights the disconnection between political rhetoric and real civic service.

Thus, the confluence of contentious electoral debates and exploitative policies elucidates a broader narrative: a political scenario in which the ideals of service and responsibility are overshadowed by an ethos that prioritizes profit and self-interest. The commodification of politics in this way not only impairs the fundamental principles of democracy but also represents a significant barrier to the transformative governance that reflects the will of the people. As political structures are increasingly reflecting business strategies, the imperative for reform emerges, emphasizing the need to restore the value of public service in Philippine Policy.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Philippines' narrowly defined profit-politics axis creates a dangerous dynamic that brings an all-encompassing, capitalist framework to the archipelago that deeply places the need for money above the machinations of political operations. The 69 million voters will soon be becoming victims of a long-standing sense of electoral genocide whereby votes and tax money must be offered in exchange, and campaign trail funds. These include the hyper-partisan polarization that makes it impossible to pass bipartisan legislation, the fragmentation of institutions that prevents effective coordination across government agencies, and the legitimacy crisis that has led people to feel that their votes do not matter, nor does civic activism.

Rebuilding trust and faith in these institutions will require a concerted effort to ensure transparency, maintain the integrity of our elections, and foster a political culture motivated by real public service. Only with a strong civic education, advocacy for policy reforms, and also holding politicians accountable can we be able to overturn the dynamics of traditional Philippine politics into one made truly for the people.

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